

AFRICA HIGHER EDUCATION CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

PSC MEETING & ACE PROJECT WORKSHOP

November 14 – 17, 2016

Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire

ACE PROJECT UPDATE: NUMBER 4 OF 2016

This update outlines project activities undertaken by the Association of African Universities (AAU) as the Regional Facilitation Unit (RFU) of the ACE Project, the World Bank and the ACEs following the Eighth (8th) Project Steering Committee (PSC) and Fifth (5th) Workshop of the Africa Higher Education Centres of Excellence (ACE) held in Accra Ghana, on May 16 – 19, 2016.

General Issues:

The minutes of the 8th ACE PSC meeting was shared with PSC members and World Bank team for their input. The final version of the document has been posted on the AAU website in both English and French.

Country national review meetings

The Ghana National Review Committee held two meetings in July and October 2016 as part of preparations toward the 9th PSC Meeting and 6th Project Workshop planned for November 2016 in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. Discussions focused mainly on monitoring and evaluation, and funds usage.

Project monitoring and support

The ACEs are preparing their reports for submission in accordance with the timetable given to them. Also, discussions are on-going with subject-matter experts and other stakeholders regarding the next round of supervision missions to the ACEs, as well as on tailor-made technical assistance to particular ACEs based on their needs. The second supervision mission to six ACEs (CEFTER of Benue State, Nigeria; CEA-SMA of Benin Republic; CETIC of Cameroon; CERHI of Benin City, Nigeria; CERSA of Togo; ACEPRD of Jos, Nigeria; and CENTDFB of Zaria, Nigeria) took place in the month of October 2016.. Final supervision is taking place with CERSA in Togo and CEFTER in Benue State of Nigeria prior to the Abidjan workshop.

Supervision Missions to CERHI, ACEPRD, and CENTFDB:

The supervision mission to the three Nigerian ACEs, namely the Africa Centre of Excellence for Reproductive Health Innovation (CERHI) in University of Benin, Benin

City; Africa Centre of Excellence in Phytomedicine Research and Development (ACEPRD) at the University of Jos, Jos; and the Centre of Excellence for Neglected Tropical Diseases and Forensic Biotechnology (CENTDFB) at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria) was undertaken during 20 – 28 October 2016 by AAU, World Bank, Health experts and the National Universities Commission of Nigeria. The purpose of the supervision mission was to assess and discuss implementation progress and challenges, and have interactions with ACE students and partner institution representatives. In all the meetings, AAU shared an agenda with each of the three ACEs which included a courtesy call on the vice chancellor; meeting with the ACE team; interaction with ACE Masters and PhD students; and a debriefing session with the ACE team and the vice chancellor.

The Review Mission identified some scientific and education progress, but also noted some important challenges with project management of the three ACEs, their faculty management, student and curriculum organization, as well as financial arrangements and cost recovery approaches, coupled with national and international partnership arrangements. Follow-up action plan and recommendations for improvement have been shared with all 3 centers with a further review by NUC to take place in January 2017 on the progress of the proposed actions. A similar report has been shared with CETIC-Cameroon and IMSP-Benin, where again challenges with these centers were up front discussed with a view to improving the center's project implementation.

Results Verification:

DLR 2.1 – 2.5 (student enrollments, outreach periods and accreditation-national and international).

Technopolis undertook a pilot verification exercise for five selected ACEs, namely, ACEGID, CEFOR, PAMI, WACCBIP and WACCI. The exercise focused mainly on the 2014/2015 results and sought to corroborate the data submitted by the ACEs on DLI 2.1 – 2.6 (student enrollment, regionality and enrollment per course) using an online survey. Together, the 5 centres earned USD 3,555,375-on average each center had a disbursement of approximately \$1 million verified. Summary verification reports detailing the results reported against what was verified, and the funds earned were shared with the five centres. Disbursement letters have subsequently been issued to the World Bank with copies to the centres. See Annex1 for a summary verification report for all five ACEs.

During the verification exercise some amendments were made regarding regional thresholds and outreach periods. Currently the threshold for regionality is set at 30% in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD). However, given the challenges in the first year of implementation, the Bank, in consultation with the AAU, has lowered this to 20% for the first round of verification of results only. In the second round of verification in 2017, the threshold will be 30% as originally envisaged in the PAD.

With respect to outreach periods, it was clarified that student internships eligible for disbursement should cover at least one month's stay in industry, private sector and or relevant sector institute. Outreach periods undertaken at another higher education institution or research institution will not be eligible for disbursement.

Next Steps: The reports of the remaining 14 ACEs were submitted to Technopolis for the second phase of the verification exercise. The ACEs were each requested to

provide missing information following which revised reports were submitted. Given some delays in receiving revised reports from CEA-CETIC and CEA-MITIC, verification of their results has been postponed to the next round in 2017. However, disbursements would be made to these two centres for achievements on DLR 2.6 (*research*) and 2.7 (*external revenue*). The exercise was extended to increase response rates and the ACEs were provided with lists of their students who had not yet responded to the survey. A report on the following centres: CERSA, CEA-SMA, CENTDFB, CERHI, CEFTER and ACEPRD was submitted on October 21, 2016. Verification reports have been prepared for these centres and disbursement letters drafted. These would be finalized after discussion with the centres concerned to help the ACEs claim their earnings for DLRs 2.1 – 2.6. The ACEs concerned are however yet to submit their EEPs which is critical for determining payments to be made.

DLI 2.6 (Research Publications)

Elsevier has submitted the results achieved per ACE on DLR 2.6 (research publications). Summary reports on this showing specific publications and the associated SDR have been shared with all the ACEs for comments. These reports will be merged with the report on DLRs 2.1 – 2.5 and attached to the disbursement letters.

DLI 2.7 (Revenue Generation)

The ACEs have submitted details on their externally generated income and the World Bank fiduciary team will be verifying the information provided.

DLI 2.8 (Learning and Research Infrastructure)

It is important to move forward with DLI 2.8 and understand why progress has been very slow and how to speed up. For DLR 2.8 on construction, the AAU/WB team has engaged architects to undertake verification. The focus will be on checking compliance with agreed procedures and ensuring the quality of the construction. It is important that updates on the status of the milestones for DLI 2.8 is provided to AAU to allow for planning, not only of the verification, but ensuring that all infrastructure and equipment activities are completed in time. All major equipment under this DLI 2.8 must be procured by June 30, 2018. Also, all civil works must be procured and contracts signed by June 30, 2018. No more civil works will be accepted after this deadline, given the length of time it takes to conclude such activities and the lifespan of the project. The following DLI 2.8 points will be addressed at the November 2016 workshop:

- Each ACE is to prepare a 5-point plan of next steps for this DLI, to be included in the Workshop's Aide memoire.
- The AAU/WB team will facilitate discussions with the ACEs to understand their constraints in moving forward with civil works and major equipment procurement.
- The WB team will work further with ACEs that are yet to finalize their DLI 2.8 formulation.

Monitoring & Evaluation:

Review of M&E Reports: Submission was timely this year with over 90% of ACEs submitting their M&E reports by the deadline of October 14, 2016. To facilitate the

reporting process and ensure early submission, two audio meetings were held with the M&E Officers of the individual ACEs in September 6-7 and October 6-7 respectively. Issues regarding how to report non-verified students, preparation for verification and calculation of DLR earnings, were discussed. This time around, in accordance with the recommendation of the PSC, only actual results instead of cumulative results were reported. See [Annex 2](#) for summary results.

Additionally, the operational manual has been updated with regard to DLI definitions, project administration and other areas. A FAQ on the indicators (attached here for information) has been incorporated and the project website has also been updated.

ACE Project Disbursement

Project disbursement is progressing fairly well with 26% of project funds disbursement. Following the successful verification exercise for the 5 pilot ACEs, approximately \$3.5 million is expected to be disbursed in November 2016. In addition, the disbursement for the remaining 14 centers (approximately 7-12 million) will be made before December 2016. This is the estimated verified amounts for the remaining centers based on average verified amounts from the pilots.

Country	Original Amount In SDR	Disbursed in currency	%disbursed (including advances) Top of Form
Gambia	2,000,000	974,214	49%
Nigeria	45,300,000	13,849,160	31%
Senegal	10,400,000	2,216,716	21%
Burkina Faso	5,200,000	1,614,954	31%
Benin	5,300,000	1,126,812	21%
Cameroon	5,200,000	1,136,935	22%
Ghana	15,600,000	3,756,678	24%
Togo	5,200,000	1,099,900	21%
Cote d'Ivoire	15,000,000	1,800,000	12%
AAU	3,300,000	1,995,331	60%
Project wise	112,500,000	29,570,700.61	26%

In addition to project disbursement, funds utilization for each country will be shared at the workshop. This data is being collected through the interim financial report and spending of the above disbursed funds to the centers will be shared at the workshop. See [Annex 3](#) for disbursement per ACE.

ACE Project Mid-Term Review

The ACE project is now officially two years into implementation and has reached the mid-term point of the project. Although a mid-term review is similar to a regular semi-annual project review and in general covers the same aspects as a regular review, a key difference is that the mid-term review's timing will provide an opportunity to take stock of project performance, make relevant decisions regarding ACE project's future

direction, and have time left to implement decisions in order to achieve project objectives and results.

It is proposed that given the regional nature of the project and many countries involved, the Abidjan workshop is the first point of discussion on proposed mid-term review (MTR) approach followed by a review by each country on the proposed areas of improvement and adjustment with countries providing specific inputs to the MTR. The proposed approach is that overall themes of the MTR be presented at the workshop with discussion and inputs from the PSC and ACE centre leaders on what currently works in the project and possible areas for improvement in project implementation.

The mid-term review will offer an opportunity to the Governments, AAU, and Bank teams to jointly revisit efficacy and effectiveness of project design and implementation approach, resolve problems, reallocate funds from weak performing centers to strong performing centers after sufficient time and consultations have been provided to the weak centers (at least 6 months) for improvements. Good planning and quality preparation are therefore essential for a successful MTR. It is proposed that the MTR is launched at the Abidjan workshop with an agreed timeline over the next couple of months on key decisions and meetings taking place at country levels.

Aide Memoire and PSC Minutes

Kindly find attached the ACE Aide Memoire which has been communicated to majority of the ACE countries. As stated earlier on, the AAU has uploaded the Minutes of the PSC meeting on its AAU website.

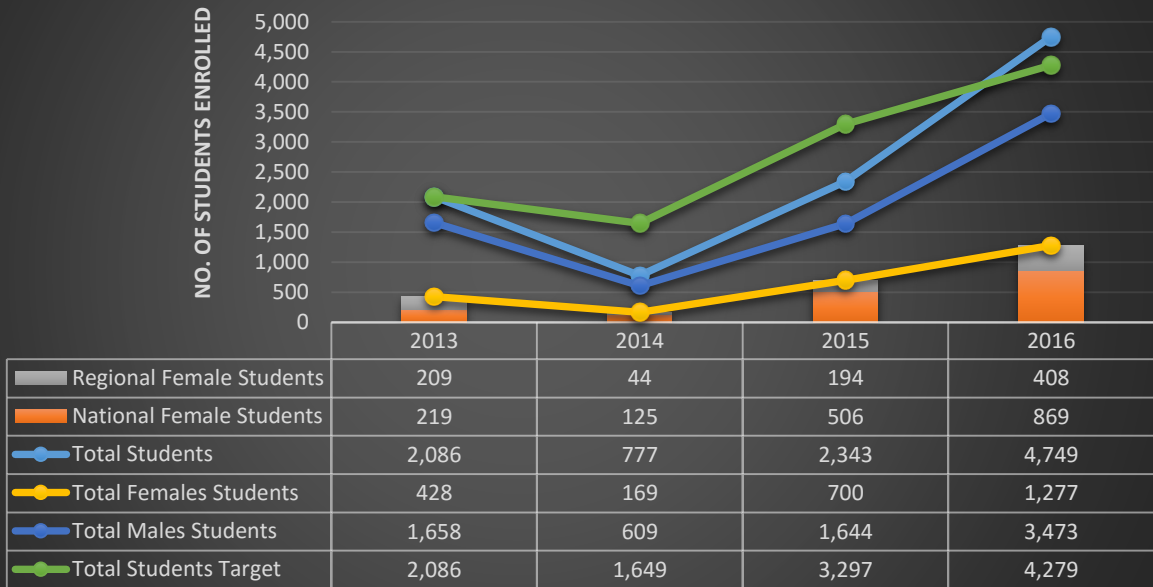
**ACE PROJECT
PROJECT-WIDE PERFORMANCE REPORT
(OCTOBER 2016)**

DISBURSEMENT LINKED INDICATORS (DLIs)	ACTUAL RESULTS 2016	CUMULATIVE RESULTS (2013 - 2016)	ACTUAL AS % OF CUMULATIVE¹
TOTAL # OF STUDENTS	4,774	8,002	60%
REGIONAL STUDENTS	1,229	1,972	62%
NATIONAL STUDENTS	3,546	6,030	59%
FEMALE STUDENTS	1,280	2,143	60%
REG. PHD	121	224	54%
REG. MASTERS	455	1,020	45%
REG. SHORT COURSE	1,344	1,544	87%
EXTERNAL REVENUE	7,191,155	18,396,055	39%
FAC TRAINED	592	1,236	48%
NEW/REVISED CURRICULAR	25	125	20%
RESEARCH	535	943	57%
PARTNERSHIPS	102	257	40%

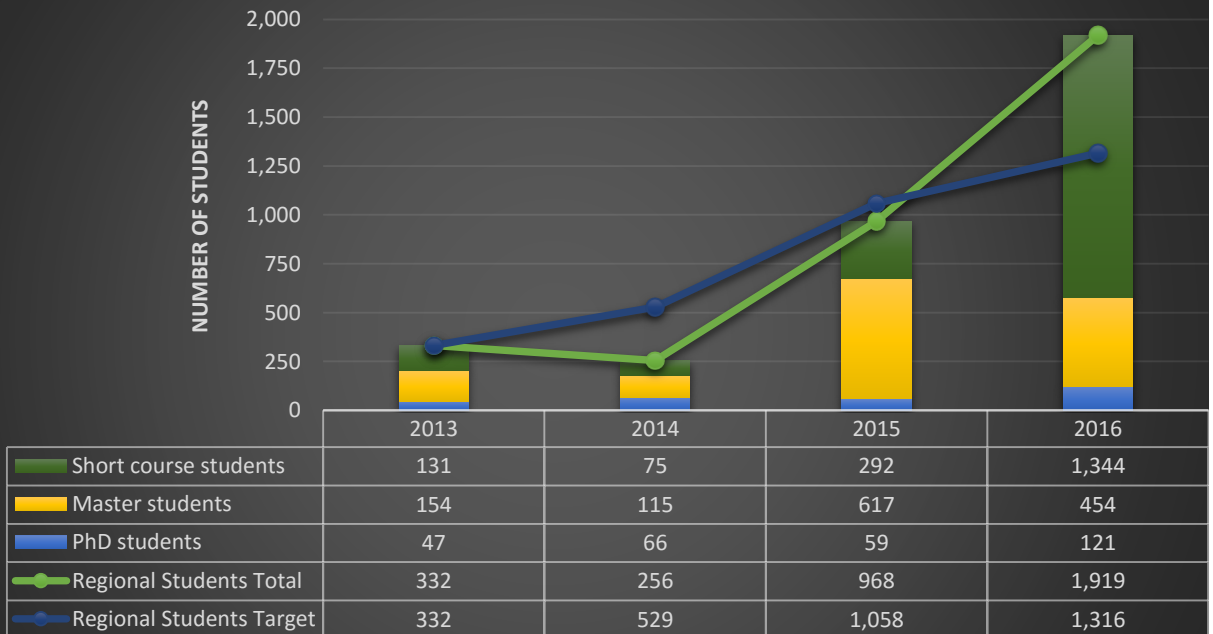
¹ Gives an idea how much work was achieved over the period October 2015 – October 2016.

PROJECT-WIDE ACTUAL PERFORMANCE PER DLI (2013 – 2016)

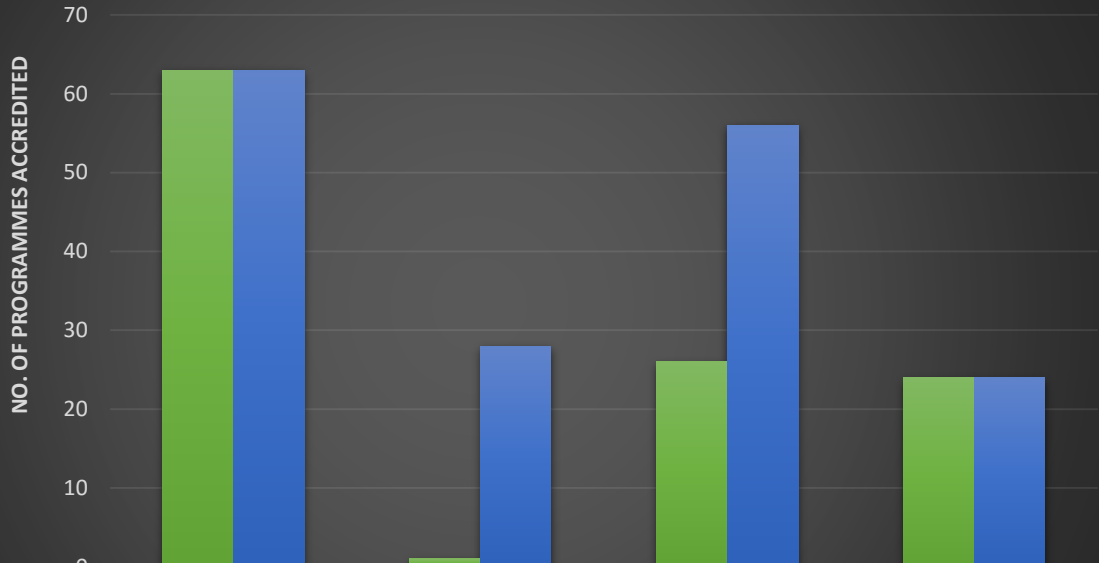
DLI 1: STUDENT ENROLLMENT BY GENDER & REGION



REGIONAL STUDENTS BY COURSE LEVEL

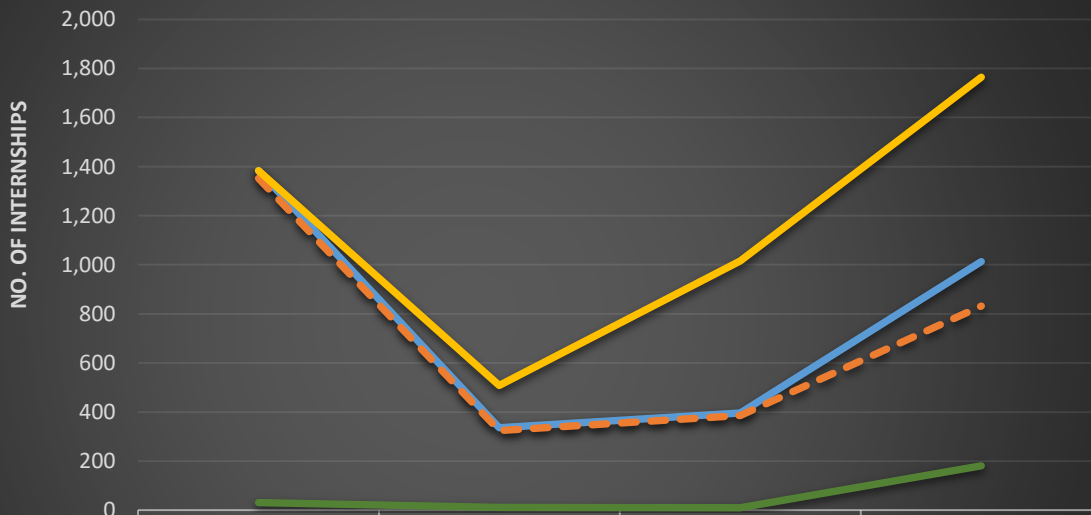


DLI 2: ACCREDITATION



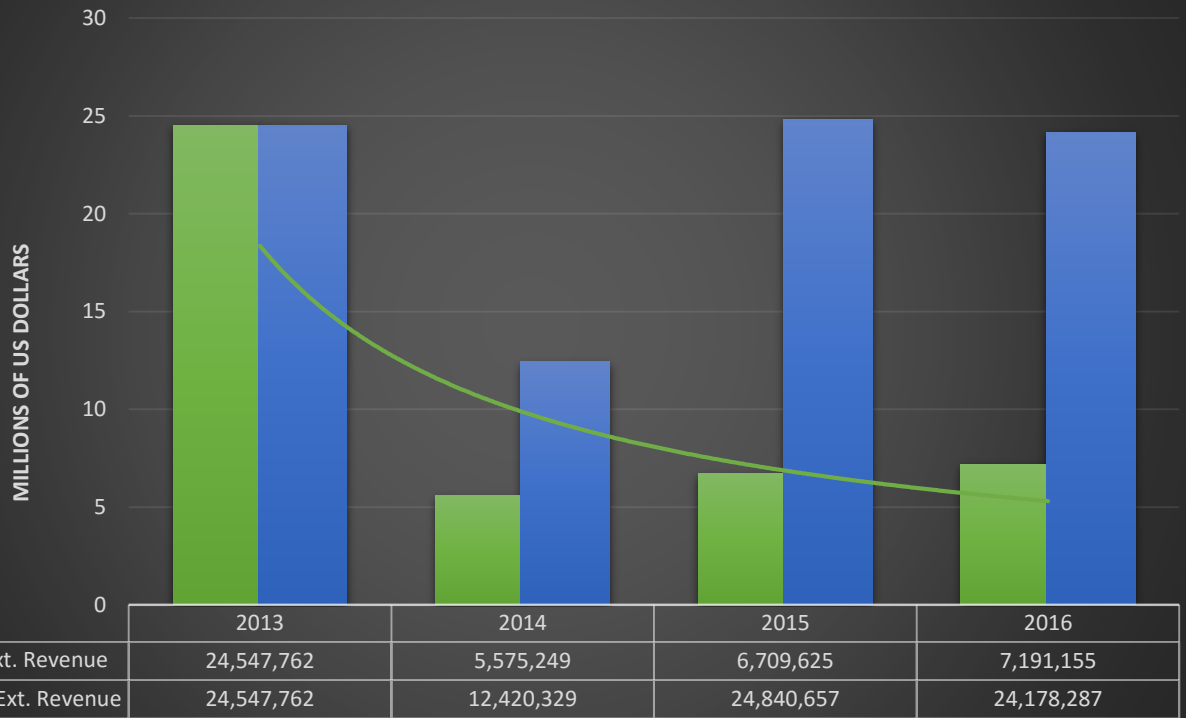
	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total Accreditation	63	1	26	24
Target Accreditation	63	28	56	24

DLI 3: INTERNSHIPS

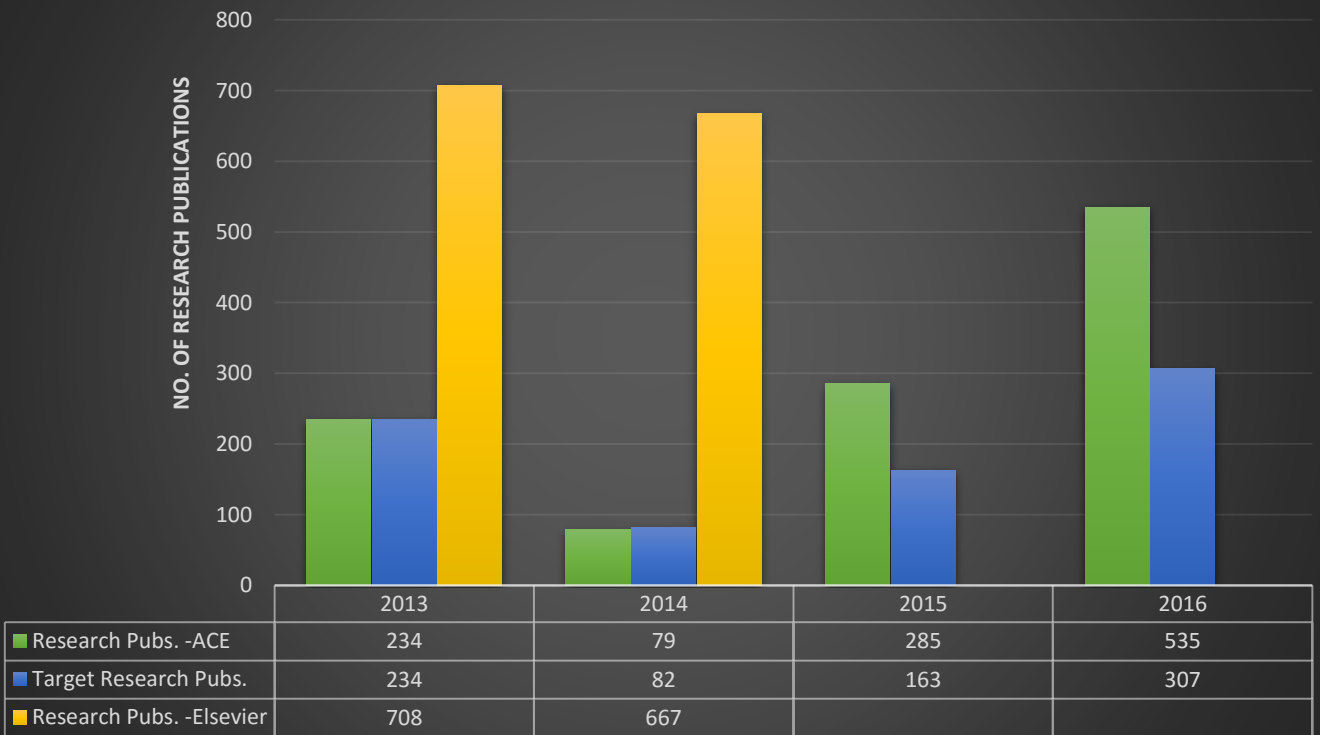


	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total Internships	1,383	336	396	1,013
Student Internships	1,352	325	386	832
Faculty Internships	31	11	10	181
Target Internships	1,383	508	1,016	1,764

DLI 4: EXTERNAL REVENUE



DLI 7: RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS



SUMMARY REPORT
VERIFICATION OF 2014 – 2015 RESULTS FOR SELECTED ACEs

ACE	INDICATOR	RESULTS REPORTED	RESULTS VERIFIED	PERCENTAGE VERIFIED	SDR PER UNIT	SDR TOTAL
ACEGID <i>Redeemer's University, Nigeria</i>	New Short-term Students	83	77	93%	26,325	670,175
	New Masters Students	23	13	57%	21,450	
	New PhD Students	15	11	73%	112,400	
	No. of Outreach Periods	23	0	-	0	
	Accreditation	0	0	-	0	
	Research Publications	42	24	57%	510,000	
CEFOR <i>University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria</i>	New Short-term Students	96	40	42%	21,060	660,160
	New Masters Students	135	19	14%	26,000	
	New PhD Students	55	46	84%	309,200	
	No. of Outreach Periods	0	2	-	3,900	
	Accreditation	0	0	-	0	
	Research Publications	40	32	80%	300,000	
PAMI <i>African University of Science & Technology, Nigeria</i>	New Short-term Students	257	98	38%	39,000	701,625
	New Masters Students	34	14	41%	27,625	
	New PhD Students	18	12	67%	125,000	
	No. of Outreach Periods	0	0	-	0	
	Accreditation	0	0	-	0	
	Research Publications	68	54	79%	510,000	
WACCI <i>University of Ghana, Ghana</i>	New Short-term Students	0	0	-	0	738,525
	New Masters Students	11	11	100%	18,525	
	New PhD Students	28	24	86%	260,000	
	No. of Outreach Periods	0	0	-	0	
	Accreditation	0	0	-	130,000	
	Research Publications	17	15	88%	330,000	
WACCBIP <i>University of Ghana, Ghana</i>	New Short-term Students	25	23	92%	7,540	784,890
	New Masters Students	30	23	77%	35,750	
	New PhD Students	15	13	87%	89,000	
	No. of Outreach Periods	7	2	29%	2,600	
	Accreditation	2	2	100%	130,000	
	Research Publications	48	39	81%	520,000	
TOTAL SDR EARNED						3,555,375

NOTE: Response rate to the online survey was low in some instances given connectivity and other technical challenges. Students who could not respond to the verification survey would be given the opportunity to do so during the next verification exercise in 2017.

PERCENTAGE OF FUNDS DISBURSED PER ACE

